

**This is my written testimony and I will not be testifying at the hearing.**

**I am writing to give my testimony regarding Raised Bill # 6517, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO ANALYZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS GOVERNING DYSLLEXIA INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING.**

**My name is Dr. Maureen Ruby, and I currently reside in Stratford, Connecticut. I have a Ph.D. in Special Education from the University of Connecticut.**

**I am a former practicing dentist and mother of a student with dyslexia. I changed careers and became an elementary educator, receiving a masters degree in education and CT teaching certification. Entering the classroom as a grade one teacher, I had no idea how to teach reading, despite the fact that teaching first graders to read and write was one of the, if not the most important professional responsibility of my position.**

**I personally assumed responsibility for learning how to teach reading, at great personal cost both with regard to time and finances. After several years as a classroom teacher, I went to UConn to pursue my Ph.D. in Special Education with a focus on Literacy, Learning Disabilities, and Teacher Knowledge of Reading Instruction. Upon completing my doctorate, I became a full-time tenure track professor at Eastern Connecticut State University where I taught graduate reading and assessment courses and was charged by the Dean to write, with my then colleague, Dr. Brandon Monroe, the graduate reading program for experienced teachers who were studying for their certification(s) in reading. We developed both the Remedial Reading – 102 certification and the Reading Consultant – 097 certification programs. Teachers with five and more years of experience came to ECSU for this program. Most were working in Connecticut schools as elementary classroom teachers and by observation and their admission, they knew little about teaching reading.**

**I have worked as a full-time tenured faculty member in the Connecticut State University System at Eastern Connecticut State University, where I co-developed the two graduate reading certification programs (Remedial Reading Specialist [102] and Reading Consultant [097]) and also taught the required certification course in Special Education. As an Adjunct Professor at the University of Connecticut's Teacher Certification Program for College Graduates, I also taught Reading for Special Education candidates.**

**I have served as a Central Office administrator in New London and Norwalk and I am currently Assistant Superintendent in Brookfield. No matter where I have worked, I have found the same thing: teachers who have gone to school for certification, predominantly in Connecticut, who are hard-working and dedicated educators, yet their toolboxes are empty when it comes to assessing, developing programs for, and teaching students who are at-risk in reading or who are with identified reading disabilities and dyslexia. Please help put a stop to this travesty!**

**I was once called by an administrator from a DRG B district who interviewed one of my special education students – a student who I had taught in my special education reading course in the TCPCG at UConn. The administrator said that the candidate knew more about reading than the reading specialists in her district and she wished she could hire her for reading! I am confident that we can prepare teachers to begin their careers with the appropriate beginning tools in their educational tool kits. We must do this for all teachers, regardless of what program they attend or which professor they get! Having to teach students about Evidence-based Literacy may also increase the knowledge of the content of those who prepare our candidates.**

**As an assistant superintendent, I spend a great deal of time working with principals and the Special Education Department in the district on professional learning relative to all things "reading." Our students**

**deserve to have teachers who graduate from their certification programs with a foundation that is ready to be expanded and deepened, rather than needing the district to build their initial foundation in assessing and instructing literacy!**

**I fully support Raised Bill # 6517, AN ACT IMPLEMENTING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE TASK FORCE TO ANALYZE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LAWS GOVERNING DYSLEXIA INSTRUCTION AND TRAINING. We have an opportunity , with this legislation, to enact laws and provide long overdue supports to make a difference in the lives of students and their families, the professional lives of teachers, and the future of our educational system and economy in Connecticut.**

**Thank you.**